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OKH Project # 7

ARMY HIGH COMMAND - DUTIES OF ARMY TRAINING BRANCH

By

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ROEHRICHT joined the Army in 1915 after studying jurisprudence and philosophy at the Breslau University. He was promoted colonel in January 1939, at which time he was Chief, Operations Division, IV Infantry Corps, stationed in Dresden. In February 1942 he was promoted Generalmajor, in April 1943 Generalleutnant. At this time he was on the eastern front, having been assigned to there in command of the 95th Infantry Division. In May 1944 General ROEHRICHT assumed command of XII Infantry Corps, in the south sector of the eastern front.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The fighting power of an army is determined not only by its numbers, armament, and equipment but also by its skill. Training helps to prevent losses, enhances the power of decision, and strengthens morale.

In the course of a war, especially if it is a long war fought under varying geographical and climatic conditions, the Army High Command must constantly exercise its influence upon the training of the field troops, the replacements, and especially the newly activated units.

Another task is the speedy evaluation of new experiences in combat. These must then be transmitted promptly and in the proper form to the field army, to all instructional establishments, and to the reception centers.

These responsibilities demonstrate the necessity of a top-level staff section to direct training policy, such as the one that existed in the Army General Staff and also serve to define its more important functions.

Since the author had no printed or documentary sources, he had to rely exclusively on his memory in writing the following report.

CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATION OF THE TRAINING BRANCH

I. ORGANIZATION BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

During the last peacetime years, the training responsibilities of the Army High Command were discharged by two branches, both under the Assistant Chief of Staff II (Training). These were:

(a.) The 4th Branch (Troop Training) consisted of the following:

Training Section (general directives, annual training program, field maneuvers)

Camps and Training Grounds Section

Training Manuals Section (Regulations, Instructions)

Film Section

(b.) The 11th Branch (Officer Training)

General Staff Training (War Academy Courses, Problems, Examinations)

Training of regular and reserve officers.

1. Principles of German Troop Training in Time of Peace

It was the traditional principle of the German Army to give leaders of all grades a great amount of independence.

That meant:

a. Independent tactical missions. Officers were trained to expect and execute clearly defined missions, with considerable independence in their

accomplishment, and without constant interference on the part of higher headquarters.

b. Training with a view to determined and bold action even in situations where, due to inferiority in numbers and equipment, the chances of success were not very great. Materiel was never overrated.

These principles were not limited to higher headquarters but applied to all units including battalion, company, platoon, and even squad leaders.

In the Reichswehr with its selected personnel and thorough peacetime training (12-year enlistments) this aim was more or less attained.

It always remained an ideal to aim for.

The introduction of universal military service and the drastic expansion of the army automatically lowered these standards, and made it impossible to convey the achieved state of knowledge, education, and training to the rapidly growing body of officers and NCOs. Another disadvantage was that officers who were taken back into active service had often had an insufficient training, yet they soon had to be employed in positions for which they had not been properly prepared.

2. Outline of Peacetime Training Activities.

a. Troop Training

Aside from the general directives (service regulations, regarding the exercise of command) the central office issued orders each year as to what type of exercises should be held and what should be particularly stressed. Controlled exercises with a definite objective in view usually took place on the training grounds. Great value was attached to problems

in free maneuver on different types of terrain. To solve certain problems (for example, motor transport) experimental exercises were held whenever needed. The experience gained was then evaluated and the information passed on.

b. Officer Training

Great importance was attached to the training of the commanders themselves (for their present and next higher positions). For the higher and intermediate levels of command this training took place in the form of orientation trips, frequently in the company of the Commander in Chief of the Army personally. To insure uniform understanding and application of the principles of leadership, tactical rides, critiques, and tactical map exercises were held each year in the headquarters of armies, corps, and divisions. There were also regular courses of instruction (for instance in the divisions for staff officers). And then there was of course the special training in individual arms (instruction at the Infantry School, Artillery School, etc.).

It is beyond doubt that the German Army since 1918, small and logically organized as it was, had been on a high level as regards systematic training methods and that this was a main reason for its initial successes in World War II.

The over-hasty rearmament and inevitable developments during the war had the effect of destroying what had been built up with so much care. Mistakes were also made, some of which could not have been avoided. The influence of the supreme political command finally led to a progressive dis-

organization of the whole apparatus of military leadership and paralyzed the systematic influence of the latter upon the standards of training. The Army command was thus deprived of an essential means of leadership with which to achieve military success.

II. ORGANIZATION DURING THE WAR

For organization, activities, and chain of command see charts 1, 2, and 3.

Peace-time duties were discontinued when the war began. The training grounds were transferred to the Commander of the Replacement Training Army. The War Academy (which trained officers for a career in the general staff) was dissolved.

The post of Assistant Chief of Staff II was abolished and the 4th and 11th Branches together formed the Training Branch which, for its war duties under the Army High Command, moved to the field headquarters at Zossen along with the Chief of Staff. Part of the Branch remained in Berlin during the first months of the war.

CHART 1

ORGANIZATION OF ARMY TRAINING ACTIVITIES

1938 - September 1939

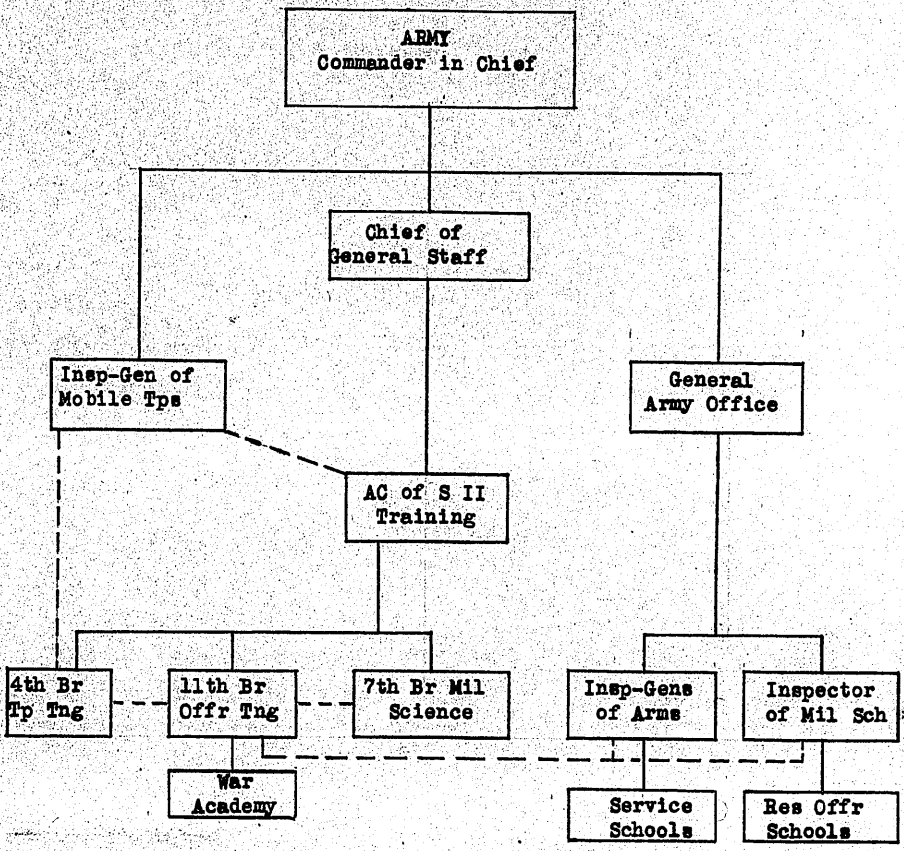

CHART 2

ORGANIZATION OF ARMY TRAINING ACTIVITIES

September 1939 to 1942

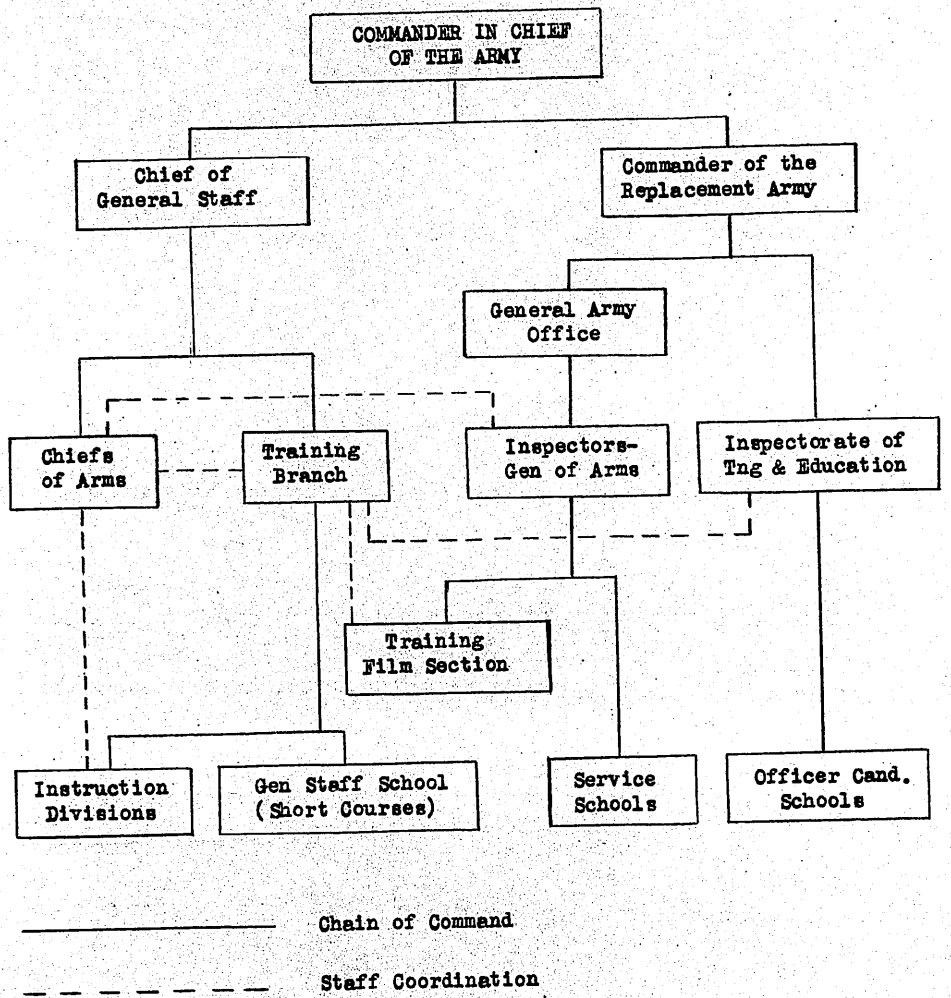

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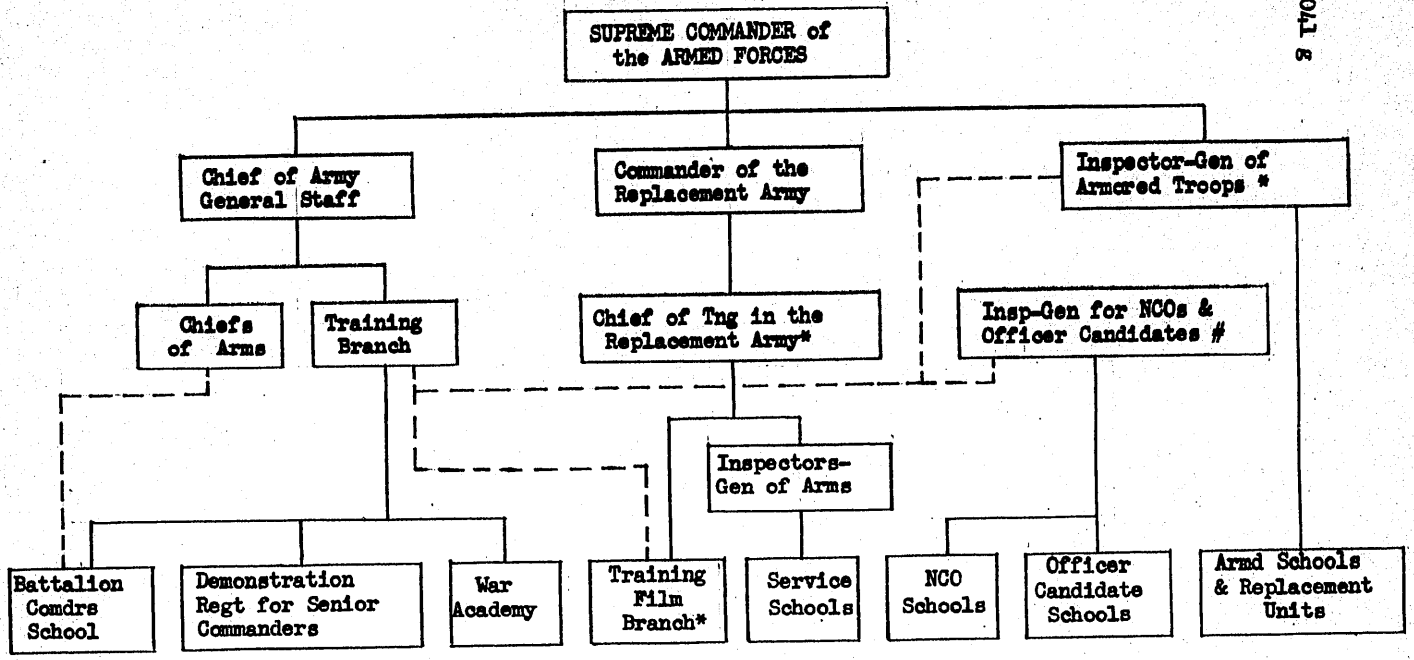
CHART 3

ORGANIZATION OF ARMY TRAINING ACTIVITIES

1942 to 1945



——————— Chain of Command

— — — — — — Staff Coordination

* Established 1943

\# Established 1944

NOTE: At this time Hitler personally was C in C of the Army; therefore that echelon is omitted from Chart.

CHAPTER 3

WORKING METHODS OF THE TRAINING BRANCH

To illustrate the operations of the Training Branch, two representative periods have been chosen:

The winter of 1939-40 (until the beginning of the Western Campaign).

Summer 1940 to Spring 1941 (until the beginning of the campaigns in the East).

I. THE WINTER OF 1939-40

1. General

A pause of several months between the Polish and French Campaigns offered an opportunity to train the mass of the mobilized field forces for possible future assignments. Changes in the training organization, made at this time to fill specific needs, proved their worth and were the basis for all subsequent measures in this field.

Only part of the mobilized forces were at the West Wall, in contact with the enemy but not involved in large-scale engagements. The mass of the troops were behind the west front as strategic reserves, or in the zone of interior. Among them the number of newly organized formations was growing from month to month.

The short campaign in Poland had not brought any new experiences which would have justified a basic revision of the manuals regarding the conduct of operations, since the enemy had been of inferior strength, and the campaign

had been very short. To a great extent the Army had fought this campaign in peace-time formation.

There were no operating directives at all covering the position warfare in the fortified zone of the West Wall. The replacements, of whom most of the newly organized formations had been formed, had not had any thorough training. Most of the leaders lacked experience in combat with combined arms. The time that was left until new duties would be assigned had to be used to improve the training and ability of the troops in accordance with orders issued through the normal chain of command.

It was a great disadvantage that it was unknown how long the period of rest would last. The directive of the Supreme Command to keep the troops constantly ready for an offensive or a counter-attack made it impossible to deploy the closely massed units for training purposes or to make such use of the training grounds as would have been desirable. Armored divisions, for instance, could not be transferred to training grounds east of the Rhine, although this would have been exceedingly desirable, since they had just received new weapons at that time, were just reorganized, and had had no other opportunity for unit exercises.

2. Training of Troops

The Training Branch of OKH could restrict itself to the issue of short training directives stressing certain points, since the training of the units organized for combat operations lay in the hands of their own headquarters.

The army headquarters were allotted training grounds by OKH but these could not be fully utilized under the circumstances. The training manuals and training aids utilized are discussed below under a separate heading.

Not all training directives from higher authority could be complied with. For instance, it was impossible to simulate cooperation of the ground and air forces in a combat situation, for the necessary air units could not be provided for the purpose. As there was no suitable terrain, the crossing of canals was practiced on roads. There was little fuel, the winter was extraordinarily severe - these two facts had an adverse effect in many aspects of training.

3. Training of Officers

It appeared to be of major importance to improve the military education of the body of junior officers, for the steadily increasing new activations would inevitably lead to such officers' receiving positions for which most of them lacked the necessary qualifications.

The OKH took the education of officers from the battalion commander upwards into its own hands. The company commanders were trained by the armies in special courses of instruction, out of which there later developed Company Commander Schools as a permanent institution. This division of effort lasted throughout the war.

The basic order for the establishment of company and battery commanders' training courses issued by Headquarters, Army High Command, on 22 December 1939 (Gen. St. d. Heeres, Ausb.Abt.Ib, Nr. 999.39 secret, signed by von Brauchitsch)

may be found in translation on pp. 207 - 208 of German Training Methods, a pamphlet of the German Military Documents Center produced by a combined British, Canadian, and U.S. Staff in May 1946. In the same publication on pp. 163 - 206 is a translation of "A Model Training Plan for a Division Combat School" (OKH, Gen.St.d.H., Ausb.Abt.Ib, Nr. 3100/43, 8 September 1943).

For the training of battalion and regimental commanders, a suitable infantry division was transferred to a training ground in the interior of the Reich, supplied with some special personnel, and organized as a demonstration division. The objections raised against withdrawing a good, combat-ready division from the first assault wave were countered by the argument that if four classes completed the course there would be 1,200 battalion commanders who had the benefit of this instruction. If only half of them profited at all the result will be that 600 battalions would have better leadership in a future campaign. This factor obviously outweighed the temporary loss of a division.

The courses at the demonstration division lasted approximately four weeks. Aside from practical training in the art of command the officers received special instruction in the educational field for the training of their own troops. Troop welfare was stressed.

What was new in this arrangement was that in addition to instruction by the staffs of the battalions and regiments, a special organization was created, so-called instruction groups of the different arms with the corresponding sub-units.

The units of the division served as instruction units only. During the exercises all command positions from the regimental, battalion, and company commanders down to the platoon leaders as well as the positions of adjutants and specialists were filled by the participants in the course. Those student officers that had not been allotted a position were asked for their criticism.

While practical training took place in the sub-units as a rule, theoretical instruction was given by the instructors in the form of lectures, map exercises, and critiques. The influence of the instructors was especially great in the field of educational techniques.

Training maneuvers with a course determined in advance were very often held, and every opportunity was used to demonstrate the cooperation of the different arms, especially with artillery. Aside from tactical training the participants were schooled in administrative duties, in the wielding of disciplinary power, in the instruction and supervision of subordinates, in welfare, and in the supply of clothing and rations to the men. Thus these officers, many of whom had little experience, were trained for their duties as commanders.

For engineers and officers of signal and antitank units there were special supplementary courses at the Engineer School in Rosslau, the Army Signal School in Halle, and the Antitank School in Wuensdorf, after the course with the demonstration division.

The concentration of some three hundred troop commanders from all branches of the service in regular rotation gave the various staff sections

of OKH opportunities for the exercise of personal influence and the interchange of ideas.

Later developments of the concept of a demonstration division are discussed below.

There was no doubt - the officers unanimously stated - that the courses of instruction with the demonstration division were extremely effective. The combination of theoretical instruction with practical application in a division incorporating all arms was of the greatest importance, for it furthered mutual understanding and cooperation.

4. Training For Staff Duty.

The War Academy had been dissolved when the war began. No preparations had been made to continue the training of potential general staff officers, for it had been intended to wait and see how events would develop.

The expansion of the Army through continuous new activations, the corresponding increase in the number of headquarters, as well as the estimate of future casualties, led to conferences shortly after the campaign against Poland regarding an emergency course of instruction for potential general staff officers. The German experiences of World War I were insufficient to be of much help, so that the provisional arrangements of the British Army were also studied. Descriptions of them were available in war memoirs of 1914 - 18.

The result was a decision to limit the theoretical instruction to a course of 10 weeks (the Training Branch had proposed a longer period) and

to teach the practical application by having the officers serve with higher headquarters. Simultaneously other staff courses were given for senior reserve officers, especially courses for the logistical staff officers by the Army Supply and Administration Branch and for intelligence duty by the Foreign Armies Branch. These courses trained specialists and in this respect were contrary to the traditional principle of a General Staff, the principle of manysided military education to promote versatility. This development was inevitable, an emergency measure adopted because of increasing needs.

The units themselves selected the officers that were to take part in the course, thus determining the type of men they wanted to see in the general staff. It was a matter of course that the selected officers had combat experience. Besides, the candidates had usually served a number of times on detached duty with other branches and had thus acquired a knowledge of the other arms and services.

The subject of instruction was limited to operational staff duties in an infantry or armored division, with only brief descriptions of staff duty at corps level, plus some hints on the duties of intelligence and logistical officers. Thus a development had set in which was contrary to the principle of general staff versatility: general staff officers were trained as staff specialists for armored and motorized units and separately for the non-motorized infantry divisions. Under normal peace-time conditions this distinction would not have been tolerated. Theoretical instruction had to be limited to what was really needed in combat. The basic principle, which

was stressed, was that the work of the general staff officer knows but one aim: to serve the troops.

The success of such training, especially since it was so short, depended on the selection of the instructors -- suitable general staff officers with teaching ability and with combat experience.

The courses were under the direct control of the Chief of Staff. They took place close to the camp of the instruction division in order to give the officers the opportunity to take part in special exercises and to watch demonstrations. A special situation resulted from the necessity of employing former general staff officers of the old Imperial Army again in the same capacity. Since these men were supposed to possess the necessary knowledge they received only a short training course to acquaint them with the changes that had taken place in the meantime. It was taken into consideration that they would need time to adapt themselves to the new conditions. They were employed mostly in higher commands and in the Communications Zone. Some of them were soon fully capable of serving as general staff officers.

To anticipate a later judgment: The General Staff courses were too short to reach their aim to the full. The dissolution of the War Academy had been necessary, for the instructors had been needed by the various headquarters of the growing Army. It had been impossible to continue teaching. To start with it again was possible only on the basis of new combat experience. But one must presume that it would have been better if the organization could have been maintained.

The War Academy was reopened at the end of the year 1941 and the new courses lasted four months, later six and even nine months. Aside from detached service with different arms of the service the candidate officers were later ordered to serve for considerable periods at division and corps headquarters. This measure served for a better selection of applicants and gave the latter an opportunity to get a more thorough knowledge of their work.

5. Training of Army Air Observers by the Luftwaffe

In the first years of the war young reserve officers were trained as air observers at the reconnaissance and observation schools of the Luftwaffe.

The Army wanted its air observers to get correct ideas about ground warfare and about the principles that determined ground operations and tactics. The training of these young reserve officers was particularly difficult, since the subjects of instruction were many and varied and the officers were very young. The Training Branch was therefore constantly in contact with the schools for aircraft observers. All necessary tactical data, combat experience reports, changes in directives and regulations, manuals, pamphlets and supplements were constantly passed on to them.

The best way to teach ground tactics, that is, by having general staff officers of the Army teach at the Luftwaffe schools for air observers, was blocked (except in a few cases) owing to departmental jealousies and also to the lack of available Army personnel.

There were also constant difficulties as regards the training of

artillery spotting pilots, and their training was therefore not so thorough as would have been desirable considering the great importance of this auxiliary branch.

The same difficulties were encountered at the other schools of the Luftwaffe (for example the Air Staff Academy), which was very regrettable considering the necessity of cooperation in battle. A way out was to detail Army officers who had the necessary qualifications to these schools.

It is beyond doubt that much was neglected in this field and that dilettantism was allowed to thrive. The lack of a uniform command over these two branches of the armed forces thus had an adverse effect on training, as on many other activities.

6. Training Publications

The outbreak of war made it necessary to complete the existing collection of field service regulations and directives regarding the conduct of operations, whose preparation had been interrupted, and to adapt them currently and with as much foresight as possible to the experiences gained in combat against various opponents and under changing conditions. Staff cooperation in the working out of training manuals is outlined in Chart 4.

The following examples illustrate how new tactical situations required that new basic directives be issued regarding the conduct of operations.

a.) When the western Allies entered the war, there began in the fortified zone of the west a situation of static warfare based on a system of

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The following examples illustrate how new tactical situations required that new basic directives be issued regarding the conduct of operations.

a.) When the western Allies entered the war, there began in the fortified zone of the west a situation of static warfare based on a system of

numerous permanent fortifications, which were as yet partly under construction. There were no basic directives regarding this kind of position warfare. It was as new as was the improvised "permanent front" (the West Wall) hastily erected by order of the Supreme Command. Clear instructions were urgently needed. A manual was therefore begun which under the general heading "The Permanent Front" was to comprise in detail everything from the general conduct of operations to the activity of the individual divisions and their combat and service units. The manual was soon made obsolete by the development of the situation and was never completed. This attempt at writing a complete directive ended with the conviction that in war it is better not to compile a manual, which will appear when it is too late, but instead to issue pamphlets, memos or provisional instructions which contain only the essential but which reach the troops in time.

b.) The existence of extensive enemy fortifications in the border areas (continuous systems of small concrete bunkers supporting one another) confronted the Army with new tasks for which practical experience was non-existent.

Chart 4

Processing Procedure for Army Manuals and Instruction Sheets

I - Initiating Unit C - Concurring Unit

Type of Publication:	Training Br, Army GS	Other Brs Army GS	Luftwaffe Lsn, Army GS	Chiefs of Arms	Inspectors Gen of Arms
FSR, Conductct of Opns; Div & above	I	C	C	C	-
FSR, Combat Combined Arms	I	C	C	C	-
Instr Sheets, Current Eval of Combat Experience, Combined Arms	I	C	C	C	-
Instr Sheets, new Combat SOP (German & Enemy)	I	C	C	C	-
Instr Sheets, Orientation on New Theaters of Operations	I	C	-	-	-
FSR, each Arm & Service	C	C	-	I	C
FSR & Instr Sheets, Use of New Weapons	C	C	-	I	C
Training Manuals of Each Combat Arms	C	-	-	C	I
Special Regulations for use of all arms	C	C	-	C	I

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To provide the necessary information for the troops, who were having a period of rest after the campaign against Poland, the Training Branch worked out an instructional pamphlet Attack Against a Permanent Front* late in the fall of 1939. This pamphlet covered the duties of an infantry division with the necessary auxiliary arms.

Such a pamphlet, which had to be compiled very quickly, required not only a thorough study of the matter, but also tactical talent, creative imagination, and a clear, concise method of expression permitting of no misinterpretation. The pamphlet may serve as a successful example of how such a task can be solved in wartime.

c.) The necessity of close cooperation between the Luftwaffe and the Army in the event of a large-scale German break-through required special instructions. A pamphlet was therefore issued under the title Mutual Identification and Signal Authentication Procedure Between the Army and the Luftwaffe** before the Western Campaign began. It was worked out by the Army Training Branch.

The lack of a unified command with authority over the whole of the Armed Forces led to a compromise to the disadvantage of the Army. This was due to the one-sided demands of the Luftwaffe which were pressed in a most stubborn manner.

The actually adopted regulation, based on Luftwaffe insistence, that all ground troops during combat - even batteries in firing positions -

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* Angriff gegen eine staendige Front
** Erkennungs- und Verstaendigungsdienst zwischen Heer und Luftwaffe

should identify themselves by bright colored signal panels in order to prevent being attacked by the Luftwaffe by mistake, was tantamount to renouncing all camouflage. Had the enemy exploited this weakness properly, the ground troops would have suffered extraordinarily high losses and their difficulties would have been greatly increased. This case may serve as an example for the derogatory effect -- even in matters concerning regulations -- of not sufficiently defined demarcation of authority.

7. Directives Issued to the Replacement Army

The Commander of the Replacement Army was immediately subordinate to the Commander in Chief of the Army. He was responsible for the training of all replacements (enlisted men and officers). Under him were the service schools in the Zone of the Interior as well as the troop training grounds.

To insure training along uniform lines the Army General Staff (Training Branch) worked out from time to time directives in behalf of the Commander in Chief of the Army regarding the training of replacements. These directives contained certain requirements or emphasized certain points. (After the campaign against Poland, for example, it was required that all recruits from their first day of training be acquainted more than hitherto with conduct of operations at night.)

The duration of the training in the Replacement Army was also influenced at times by these directives. It was always the endeavor of the Army General Staff to make the basic training as good and as thorough as possible.

After the Polish Campaign the General Staff of the Army (Training Branch) also suggested that there should be a regular exchange of instructor personnel between the Replacement and the Field Army. The training of the replacements would profit from the employment of instructors fresh from the front.

The training in the Replacement Army has been dealt with in detail in the afore-mentioned book German Training Methods, produced at the German Military Document Center May 1946.

II. FROM SUMMER 1940 TO SPRING 1941

1. General Nature of the Western Campaign

The Western Campaign in the Spring of 1940 brought the first experiences in the combat against a numerically equal enemy with modern equipment. The Germansfor the first time committed independent armored groups (later called armored armies) in decisive operations. The experience gained in these battles made it possible to check the current principles for conduct of operations and to alter them where this proved necessary.

A campaign extending on a frontage of several hundred kilometers into the depth of a country like France does not meet the same conditions everywhere. The terrain as well as the conditions for combat change. These differences were of great importance in the individual operations, and the experiences of the troops were influenced by them. In the evaluation of combat experience these differences had to be taken into consideration.

We may distinguish three different sectors:

a. The northern wing where the mass of the non-motorized units of the Army fought under absolutely new conditions in cooperation with strong armored units committed against strategic objectives. The infantry divisions opened the front for the armored forces and were otherwise primarily used for the pursuit of the enemy. The greatest difficulty that they had to overcome consisted in traffic jams and the insufficiently solved problem of traffic control.

b. The central sector (first half of June) between Reims and Metz where the armies had to fight without any armored support, with infantry divisions only, against an equal enemy whose organization was still intact. The losses in this sector were the highest in the whole campaign. Part of them were due to faulty leadership.

c. The southern wing where the troops were at first kept back and where the attack against the Maginot Line was launched only after the defense of the forward defense area had become weak or even non-existent owing to the withdrawal of the defending forces. Decisive was the commitment of the German armored units in the rear of the Maginot Line. The break-through through a Maginot Line fully defended by a proper garrison is a legend.

It is a well-known fact that every unit tends to generalize its own experiences and to overlook the special circumstances that accompanied these experiences.

It is the task of the central compiling agency to pick out of the many

individual experiences those that are of general importance and to treat the special cases as what they are -- exceptions.

2. Methods of Collecting Combat Experience for Evaluation

a) Even before the fighting began, headquarters and troop units were ordered to report at once new enemy methods or means of combat as well as important experiences of their own.

Example: When in June 1940 the German western wing made an attack across the Somme and into the South, the Germans received the impression that the French in their so-called Weygand Line used an unusual defensive system. Since the terrain was by nature secure against mechanized attack, they established infantry strongpoints in it in great depth. The Chief of the Training Branch informed himself personally on the spot at Headquarters, Sixth Army, about the experiences gained by the troops during the attack. On the following day all units as yet in reserve received short instructions on how to cope in the most purposeful manner with the new method of defense.

b) Officers of the Training Branch were sent to sectors of the front that were of special interest in order to gain personal impressions by discussions with both senior and small unit commanders. Conditions were studied on the spot, in sectors of great importance even after the fighting was over. The main question was always: What is of general importance and what is only incidental?

c) After a campaign was over all headquarters and some of the troop units were ordered to submit reports on their experiences. In

certain cases, questionnaires were issued for the purpose.

d) Detailed oral discussians took place at Army High Command with commanders and officers who were believed to have had interesting experiences.

e) Exchange of personnel between the various important subunits of the Training Branch and detailing of experienced officers to the Training Branch who had taken part in combat in decisive places.

f) The Chiefs of Arms and Services at the OKH worked in a similar manner evaluating the experiences gained by their various arms and services. They worked in close cooperation with the Training Branch and discussed problems of mutual interest.

3. Exploitation

The work consisted in the sifting of recorded experiences and the examination of what could be regarded as a case commanding general interest and what had to be regarded as exceptional. Check-backs clarified and supplemented the picture thus gained.

From the collected material preliminary instructions and draughts were compiled which were sent for review to senior officers who combined experience with judgment. It was endeavored to test individual suggestions by troop exercises.

The first measure taken to transmit the results to the troops as soon as possible was a revision of the field service regulations for armored divisions and motorized infantry divisions. Intended organizational changes were taken into consideration. The mass of the experiences gained in the

Western Campaign were summarized in the form of an OKH instruction pamphlet, Tactical Experiences of the Western Campaign issued to all headquarters and units down to divisions, as well as to all instructional installations.

A translation of part of this pamphlet concerned with guiding principles may be found on pages 148-156 in the afore-mentioned book German Training Methods under the heading "Extract from an Order issued by the Operations (Ia) Section, Training Branch, Army General Staff, No. 3000/40g Dated 7 October 1940."

Based on the experiences during the campaign the following general requirements were imposed on the troops:

Special Training for mobile warfare, primarily for the attack and for exploitation of success in the pursuit.
Attack against fortified field positions, including those anchored on permanent installations.
Combat in woods, under cover of darkness, dust, and natural fog; river crossings.
Strict traffic discipline.

The following was required of regular and motorized infantry divisions:

Transition from the attack to the defense and vice versa.
Cooperation with the assault artillery.
Antitank combat both in attack and in defense.
Speedy digging in and strengthening of defenses of terrain.
Marches up to 60 kilometers per day, and at night.

A special notice delegated to the motorized infantry divisions the task of mopping up enemy units in forests and villages under the assumption that they would have to fight without support.

The following tasks of the armored divisions were stressed:

Attack and pursuit by mobile advance detachments operating independently.
Attacks to exploit successes gained by infantry divisions.
Attacks against mobile troops.
March exercises of several days' duration under simulated combat conditions, especially with regard to maintenance services.

Then follows a detailed account of the combat experiences of the various arms or branches of the service. The commanders of army groups and armies were charged with the supervision of training.

"The troops must be trained for combat against an equal enemy. The campaign against Poland and the western campaign have shown the tactical principles laid down in our directives to be correct." The Commander of the Replacement Army received similar directives for the training of replacements.

It was endeavored to establish close personal contact between the officers of the Training Branch and the Commandant of the reopened General Staff War Academy. The commander of the school troops destined to become the new demonstration division received notice of certain particularly instructive experiences from recent combat. He also had to be persuaded that his personal combat experiences had been partly due to local conditions (the terrain around Verdun) and could not claim to be valid in all cases.

4. Organization and Supervision of Training

Since there was no more fighting after the Western Campaign, the mass of the Army entered into a quiet period of training. A number of newly activated units needed special attention.

The courses for battalion and regimental commanders interrupted at the

beginning of the Western Campaign were again resumed, a new battle-seasoned division serving as the demonstration unit. A similar establishment was created for the Armored Command.

Chart 5 illustrates the organization of training of the Field Army in the period between the Western and Eastern Campaigns.

The headquarters had to insure that their troops were acquainted with all recorded combat experiences and that they made full use of them. For this purpose the senior commanders had to exercise their influence continuously, to conduct instructional and trial exercises and demonstrations, to set up map exercises and to confer with subordinate commanders.

Some troop commanders had a tendency to emphasize too much in the training of troops their own experiences gained in pursuit of a defeated enemy. This had to be counteracted in order to insure that the troops were mentally prepared for real combat and not merely for pursuit of an enemy who had already lost his fighting morale. Owing to the limited activity the enemy air forces had shown during the Western Campaign, the troops had become too careless regarding the danger from the air. This had to be remedied.

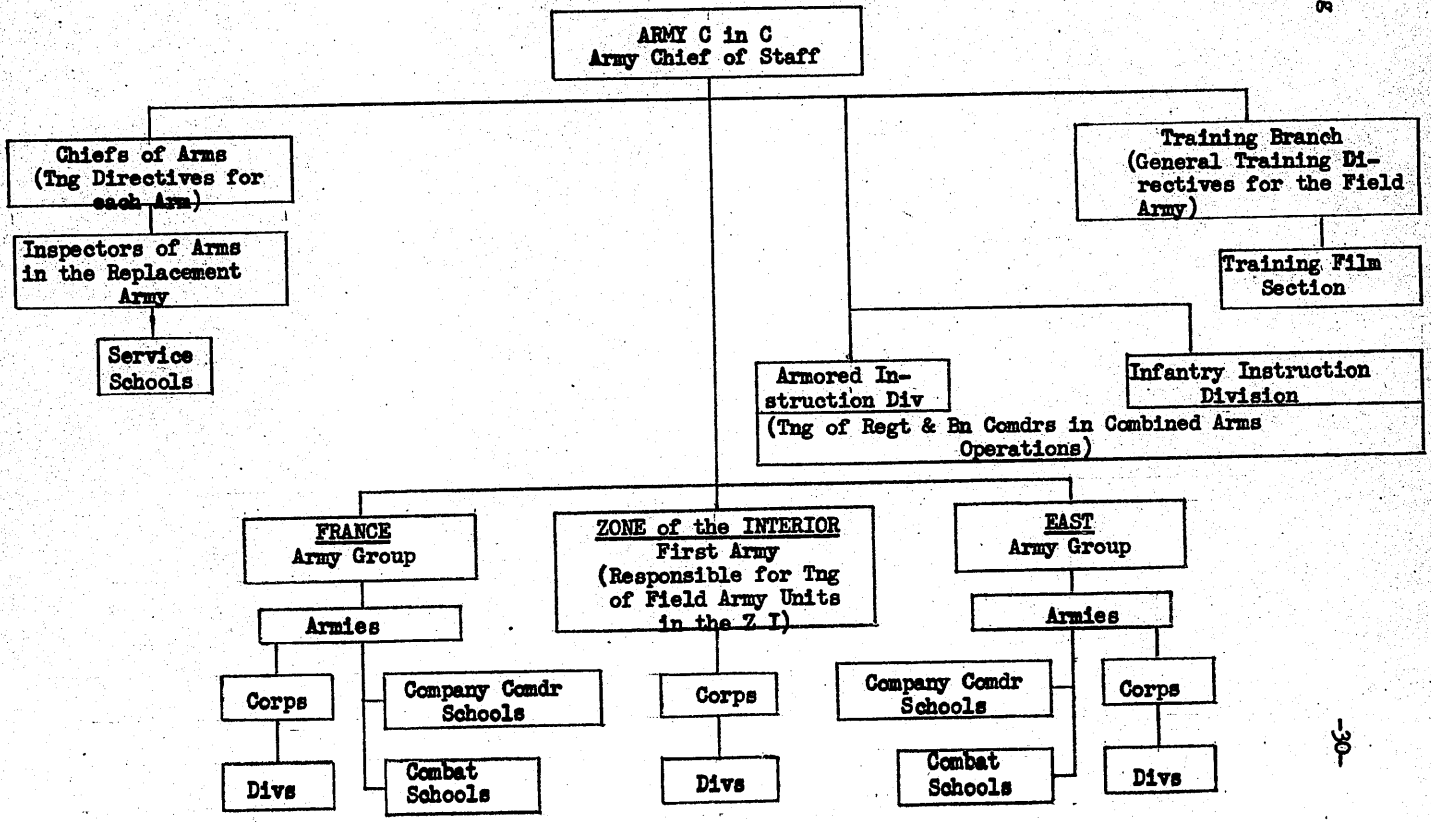
Some successful commanders (especially if their own careers had been unusual and not systematic) tended to be overbearing and forced a training program upon the troops at various times under their command that was contrary to the basic principles of combat and created confusion.

For instance, a division commander, who after the Western Campaign had

CHART 5

TRAINING ORGANIZATION IN THE FIELD ARMY BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND RUSSIAN CAMPAIGNS

September 1940 to June 1941



been promoted to command a corps, demanded that his divisions practice a schematic attack in the following form: within a period of exactly 20 minutes, a fire fight of 15 minutes had to be conducted always followed by 5 minutes of attack. This had to be repeated over and over again. Higher authority had to intervene to put a stop to this senseless stereotyped training.

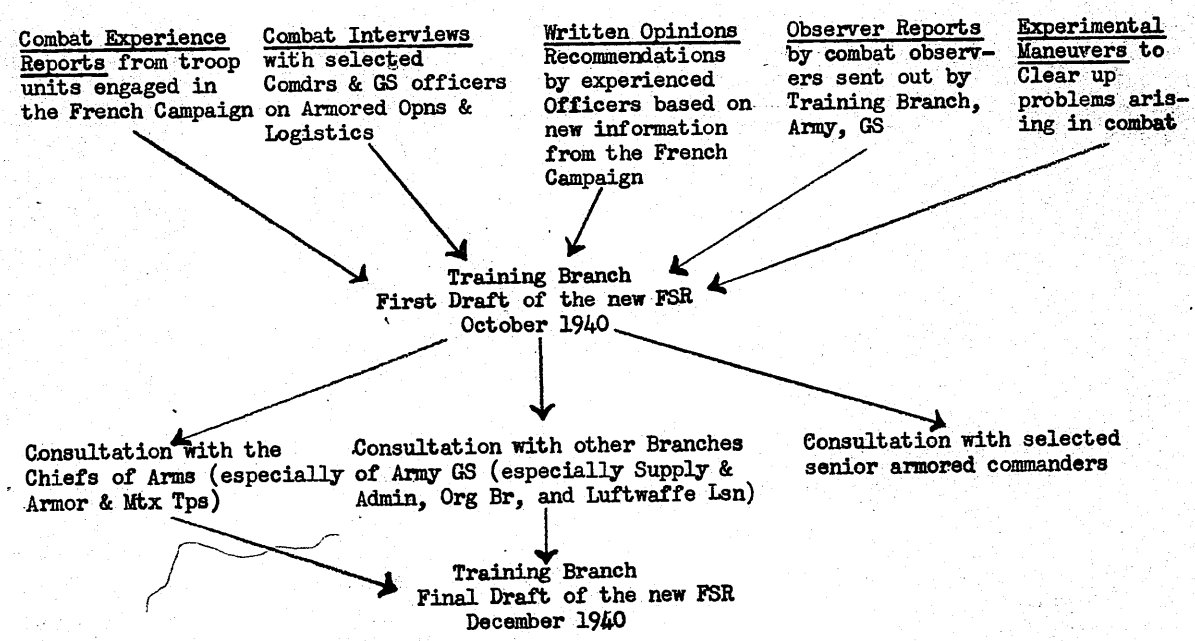
5. Evaluation of Experience in the Drafting of Training Directives

As has already been mentioned, the evaluation of the experiences gained during the Western Campaign resulted in a revision of Regulation No. D 66 "Conduct of Operations, Armored Division" and in a similar revision of the manual on the motorized infantry division. The Armored Command, owing to its quick development and a certain self-complacency that had existed from the beginning, had developed a number of tactical concepts of its own. The aim of this revision was to make the Panzer arm adhere again to the nomenclature that was current for the whole Army.

Chart 6 shows the staff procedures in the revision of Regulation No. D 66, the basis for this directive, and the persons who took part in compiling it.

Chart 6

Staff Procedures in the Revision of FSR No. D 66, " Conduct of Operations, Armored Division "



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CHAPTER 4

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COURSE OF THE WAR

I. GENERAL

1. Progressive disorganization

After the Spring of 1941 the expansion of the fighting fronts and the constant engagements left the troops no time for periods of rest such as had existed for a considerable number of units simultaneously after the Western Campaign. The immediate influence of the Army Training Branch decreased in consequence. The geographical, climatic, and other combat conditions were so varied on the different fronts, and even on the different sectors of the Eastern front, that uniform training directives could no longer be issued. Troop training was more and more taken over by the army group and army headquarters, which slowly developed tactical systems of their own, especially in such matters as antitank defense and the construction of field fortifications.

Another factor was the progressive elimination of the OKH from the chain of command. The latter lost more and more of its influence after the so-called OKW theaters of war* had come into existence. Mention must also be made of the "Special formations" -- units that did not belong to the Army but fought within the Army without the OKH having any influence worth mentioning upon their training and command. The Luftwaffe field

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* By late 1942 OKH was only responsible for three army groups in Russia. All other theaters, including Finland, were directed by OKW.

divisions and the parachute units (only part of whom had parachute training) were such units. These formations consisted of valuable personnel but their commitment as ground forces under the command of Luftwaffe officers was a failure and to the disadvantage of the Army. A similar phenomenon was the ever-increasing army of the SS-troops, followed by the Volksgrenadier divisions (something intermediate between the Army and the SS). All in all, these developments represented a progressive disorganization. Even Himmler began to issue directives regarding training and leadership. Expert knowledge was no longer a factor at this stage of progressive disintegration.

2. "The Inspector-General for Panzer Troops"

The establishment of the post of "Inspector-General for Panzer Troops" as an independent office coming directly under the Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht - that is, not subordinate to the Army High Command - may have had special advantages for the development of the Panzer arm, and it would have been possible to operate with this arrangement for a short time. As a permanent institution, however, it created confusion. Work was not coordinated and the differences in the tactical points of view produced unhappy results in the field of training.

3. The "Chief of Training"

The idea of coordinating all activity in the field of training under a "Chief of Training" led to the establishment of such an office in 1943. However, the problem was not solved, for the chief of training was appointed for the Replacement Army only. To achieve the desired

solution, it would have been necessary to change the top organization of the Army.

4. Newly-Activated Units

In the last third of the war (partly for reasons of political policy, partly in reaction against tradition) it became more and more usual that depleted divisions of the Army were no longer rehabilitated with replacements, but were themselves used as replacements to create new units instead (finally under the authority of Himmler alone).

At this time it proved particularly serious that there was in the Army no office or responsible person charged with testing each newly-formed unit before it departed for the front. It was not ascertained whether a unit was really ready for immediate commitment from the point of view of its equipment, armament, and last but not least its fighting skill. Grave mistakes were made in this respect. But this was due not only to an overestimation of the value of technical skill for the combat soldier which existed at Supreme Headquarters but also to the development of the situation at the fighting fronts. It happened frequently in critical days that a newly-formed division that was not as yet fully trained was nevertheless committed in a center of main effort where, without being of any effective help, it was destroyed within a week. Had the unit been given sufficient training, it would have been fit for action in the true sense of the word.

II. INSTRUCTIONAL INSTALLATIONS

The influence of the OKH Training Branch was now limited primarily to the instructional installations which it controlled. The following summary may be drawn from the experiences gained:

1. Instruction Divisions

The training of regimental and battalion commanders in the framework of an instruction division can be carried out in general only in case there is a comparatively long period of rest and in case a good demonstration unit is available. The establishment of schools answering the same purpose with a small permanent demonstration unit has proved advisable, if this was not the case. In the more quiet periods of position warfare such schools were established by the army groups and armies for their own requirements. Otherwise they were provided by the Replacement Army, divided according to the different arms and services, and attached to the various inspectorates. Combined arms training could not be given under such conditions.

2. The War Academy

The duration of the staff courses was at first four, later six and nine months. Purpose of the course was to train division operations officers. Instructor personnel were battle-experienced division operations officers and chiefs of corps staffs. The potential general staff officers were selected by the unit commanders, according to their talents and according to how they had behaved in

combat. As a preparation the officers were detailed to various headquarters and other arms than their own. Specifically, they had to serve four weeks with either the infantry, the artillery, or the armored troops; three weeks with the engineers; two weeks with a signal battalion; three weeks with the staff of a corps; and three weeks with the staff of a division.

The aim of this practical experience was to acquaint the officers with the functions of the troops during combat and with the work in the different headquarters under a division operations officer or a chief of corps staff. The latter were also required to give their judgment regarding the ability of the potential general staff officers. The young officers had to prove capable during this practical work in order to be detailed eventually to the War Academy.

Critique:

It was a mistake to dissolve the War Academy at the beginning of the war. Courses of less than six months' duration are too short. It was a good measure to attach the potential General Staff officers to the different arms and services at the front and to demand that they prove capable in this practical work in order to be admitted to the War Academy.

3. Training for Command

At the outbreak of the war there was as yet no need for such training. It became a necessity in the Eastern Campaign when high losses and other reasons caused very young officers to be entrusted with the command of divisions. The development of new weapons necessitated a

training of the commanders surpassing the scope of the training facilities at the front. The Training Branch for this reason created courses for division commanders at the end of 1942. The courses were taught by experienced commanding generals, and the chief was a former General Staff officer. The courses lasted four weeks, and the students were normally twenty to thirty officers selected to become division commanders. The sole purpose was to train them as division commanders. The training consisted of map exercises, lectures, inspections, and demonstrations. The students were often present for field maneuvers.

In 1943 with the growing demand these courses for division commanders were extended and called Courses for Senior Commanders. Every third of these courses was for commanding generals of corps and for corps chiefs of staff. The aim was to train these officers in the duties of a corps commander.

Critique:

The establishment of these courses was a good measure. The disadvantage was that there was too much theory and no opportunity for the exercise of practical leadership. The advantage was that the officers were billeted close to the War Academy so that the instructors of the War Academy were available for map exercises, and similar instruction, and there was an exchange of experiences, methods of instruction, and training schedules.

4. Instruction in the Use of New Weapons

The length of the war and the speedy development of new weapons often created the situation that army and corps commanders had no opportunity of getting acquainted with new weapons the use of which they themselves would have to supervise. To remedy this situation the new weapons were demonstrated

in the Field Army. A small demonstration unit under the leadership of a General Staff officer of the Training Branch and equipped with the most modern weapons that were being developed (and that had either already been introduced or were about to be introduced) were sent into the theaters of operations of army groups and armies for the purpose of demonstrating the new weapons and conducting short practical exercises. Commanders and general staff officers of the field forces were detached to attend these courses.

But only a fraction of the commanders could attend these demonstrations. Experience has shown that much more should have been done in this respect. It happened frequently during the last two years of the war that in case a modern specialized unit (for instance "hornets" -- heavy self-propelled AT guns) was attached, the corps or division commander was dependent on the suggestions the unit commander would make for their use, and that the unit was not committed in a purposeful manner, although this would have been possible.

An instructional manual, kept constantly up-to-date, for division and corps commanders would have been the thing that was most urgently needed. This manual should have dealt with all the new weapons appearing in the Army, their use and effect. Such a manual was never published and serious disadvantages were the consequence.

III. PUBLICATION ACTIVITY

1. Manuals and Information Sheets

The decrease in the authority of the OKH had its repercussions

also on the issuing of regulations. After General Halder had been removed from his position as Chief of Staff, the Army High Command gradually lost all interest in exercising a systematic influence upon matters of training.

Among the publications that were prepared during the campaign against Russia, there is one of special importance which was already completed when the winter campaign began late in 1941. Owing to adverse circumstances it produced no useful results until the winter of 1942/43. It is called Vorschrift der Winterkrieg (Manual for Winter Warfare) and is in reality a guide for all aspects of life in the winter of the East, a compendium of practical advice and experience. The problems discussed are such as the troops and every individual are bound to encounter in the eastern winter (not only during combat). The advice concerns protection from the cold for man and animal, equipment and supplies. The book contains everything from movements in the snow, survival at -30° C, construction of ice igloos, the best way to economize fuel, hints on preservation of food. The contents of this manual are such as to justify republication today.

With regard to instruction pamphlets, the Training Branch during the last years was content to issue what had been worked out by the various arms and to publish summaries like the one of dated 5 March 1944 (OKH Gen.St.d.H./Ausb.Abt. (I) Nr. 2000/44). This was a summary of 13 separate instruction sheets that had been issued previously.

This summary dealt with the following topics:

a. defense, Russian combat methods, and the use of smoke.

b. tank and antitank fighting, employment of German tanks and assault guns, conclusions drawn from Russian employment of tanks.

c. Experiences in fighting British and American troops.

d. Employment of armored trains

e. Cooperation between the Army and the Air Force.

This demonstrates that the Training Branch at that time made only compilations from existing instruction sheets that had originated with some subordinate headquarters.

Summarizing, one may say the following with regard to instructional publications:

Certain important manuals were lacking and during the whole course of the war this deficiency was not done away with. All of the following manuals could have been produced, and would have been extremely useful.

2. Some Neglected Possibilities. (Manuals that were never issued).

a. A Basic Training Manual

Such a manual should have contained what was common to all arms or branches of the service in their basic training. Besides it should have covered training from the individual up to the battalion level, formal drill and ceremonies, and the fundamental principles of the field service regulations. The various arms or branches of the service should not have been compelled to issue separate special manuals of their own, as was the case owing to the lack of a manual like the above. Why, for instance,

should the Artillery issue a booklet "Basic Field Service Regulations, Artillery, Part I", when there is already a booklet "Basic Field Service Regulations, Infantry, Part I" dealing with the very same topic in detail?

b. A Manual for the Division Commander

Contents, among other topics, should have included: organization, equipment, effectiveness of weapons, combat efficiency, and rates of march. These should also have been a survey dealing with all arms that might be attached to a division or that might require cooperation, above all the Armored Command and the Air Force.

It would have been necessary to reedit this manual frequently in order to avoid the distribution of change sheets. But frequent reeditions would have been possible, since the number of copies would not have been very high. The need for such a manual existed during the latter part of the war, for only part of the commanders were able to attend courses and demonstrations.

c. Conduct of Operations from Fortified Positions

From the fall of 1942 on, after the campaign against Russia had eventually turned into a defensive, there was a growing need for a detailed interpretation of those principles which had only been covered in one short paragraph entitled "Defense" in the German Field Service Regulations. Each army group developed its own tactics and concepts (artillery reserve position, tank intercept line, main combat zone). Even the instructions issued by the OKH contained contradictions dependent on

whether the memo had been compiled by a tactician or a technician.

Taking into consideration the great variations of the theaters of war, even insofar as Russia was concerned (contrast the Kirghiz Steppe and the coast of the Arctic Ocean), it would have been useful to issue a general manual "Conduct of Defensive Operations" and to leave it to the army groups to concern themselves with local conditions. Moreover there should have been instruction sheets dealing with technical experiences, which are subject to change if technical development is rapid.

d. A Manual for Officers of All Arms

This should have been for all officers down to company commanders. Its contents, among other subjects, should include:

guard duty in the field,
billeting,
security,
trench warfare,
construction of field fortifications, and
tactical concepts.

3. Distribution of Field Manuals

A rather important sub-unit in the Publications Section was the Distribution Office which determined the number of copies to be printed and kept the distribution list. If, for instance, a special pamphlet was to be issued for a particular theater, the Distribution Office had

to know how many persons had to be supplied with it (if necessary by air courier). The instructional installations concerned also had to get their share of the publications.

IV. TRAINING FILMS

In peacetime a Film Section was attached to the Training Branch. The task of this Section was to assist in and to supervise the production of instructional films.

During the war a number of film teams were sent to the front to take combat pictures and to provide in this manner the material for instructional films. (These teams should not be confused with the film teams of the propaganda company). The result was discouraging, for the shots that could really be used were few, and the scenes of combat that were caught by the cameras were usually unsuited to serve as training models.

In the course of the war the Film Section was assigned to the Commander of the Replacement Army.

It is beyond question that the instructional film may play an important role in wartime - and perhaps particularly in wartime - for the training of troops and officers. The German Army has not made sufficient use of this means of instruction. Special effects photos, in particular, are of great importance when used to explain technical processes (ballistics) or tactical concepts (such as fire concentration of heavy weapons). Special effects photography may

make a thing much clearer and simpler than a long explanation.

The idea proposed at the beginning of the war to create a so-called "combat noise chamber" to produce the actual sounds of battle on the training grounds, was without result. But it seems a worthy idea nevertheless for the training of modern troops, replacing the primitive blank cartridges hitherto used.

V. MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

Other duties of the Training Branch were:

1. Determination and Revision of Unit Insignia

It goes without saying that unit insignia had to be selected on a uniform basis. Personal intervention by the supreme authority changed old unit insignia in several instances during the war and created considerable confusion.

2. Rules Regarding the Keeping of War Diaries

It is a well-known fact that the keeping of journals by headquarters and units is of great importance. They constitute not only the material for the writing of unit histories, but may also be of use as training material during a war, since it may be possible to draw from them conclusions regarding certain phases of combat. The importance of war diaries (for the following legal proceedings) after the end of hostilities cannot be overestimated.

Uniform rules must insure that the progress of action is described in a matter-of-fact way and without propaganda, and that supporting

documents are preserved. It must also be insured that the diaries are submitted after a phase of a campaign is over, in order to prevent their getting lost.

3. Campaign Designations

It is necessary to have certain fixed designations for the different front sectors and the different periods of combat, in order to have a clear picture of activities in different places at different times. Such designations are important for entries in personnel rosters; and for reasons concerned with military history, and for obvious reasons they must be uniform. This was coordinated by the Training Branch in cooperation with the Operations Branch, later by the latter only.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The training activities of the Army High Command during the first two years of the war furnish an example of how the fighting power of an army may be increased and what means may be made use of for the purpose. These two years were approximately the period during which Generaloberst Halder was Chief of Staff of the Army.

When the top organization of the Army was no longer what it had been, the training of the troops was no longer systematically guided from above and the timely supply of necessary training aids and tactical instruction materials was no longer insured.

For this the German Army had to pay with severe losses.

APPENDIX

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE TRAINING BRANCH

(From the Beginning of the War Onwards)

Section I

a. Troop Training

in the Field Army
Directives for the Replacement Army, instructional and experimental exercises.

b. Officer Training

Meeting the general requirements of the Field Army; courses under the OKH.

c. General Staff Training

Training of potential General Staff officers. Advanced training of General Staff officers. Special courses in Intelligence and Logistics.

d. Special Duties

Cooperation with training authorities of the Air Force. Coordination of air-ground signal communication service. Cooperation with Allies regarding training. Demonstration of new weapons.

Section II

a. Regulations (Manuals)

For fighting with all arms (Kampf aller Waffen). Instructions for commanders from division upward. Manual for the General Staff service.

b. Instructional Pamphlets

Evaluation of new combat experiences, speedy indoctrination. Rules for the employment of important new weapons and means of combat, and measures of defense against them. Preparation for the peculiarities of certain theaters (terrain, climate). New fighting methods.

c. Supervision

Checking as to uniformity of tactical concepts and principles in training manuals, directives concerning conduct of operations for all arms and services.

d. Suggestions Regarding Instructional Films

e. Rules Regarding the Keeping of War Diaries

f. Tactical Unit Insignia

g. Distribution Lists

Fields of Activity of the Subordinate Offices

Section I

a. Troop Training

Directives for the organization and execution of training in the Field Army.

Training of units in the reserve and in rear areas.

Training of non-commissioned officers and specialists in division combat schools.

Requirements regarding the training in the Replacement Army:

What to emphasize in training,

Requests of the Field Army,

Conclusions drawn from war experience,

Exchange of instructor personnel,

Integration of replacements and units into the Field Army.

Directives regarding the carrying out of special instructional and experimental exercises.

Regulation of the Chain of Command

Authority in the field of training was divided as follows:

Unit	Training Authority
1. Units of the Field Army, Commanders of all ranks, General Staff with troops	General Staff of the Army
2. Replacements, Newly-activated units, Officer Candidates, Technical Specialists	Replacement Army
3. Armored and motorized units (trained in special courses)	Inspector of Mobile Troops, from 1943 on: Inspector-General of Panzer Troops

See also Charts 1 - 3

b. Officer Training

Directives to the Field Army regarding the training of company and battery commanders in Army Service Schools and in special courses.

Directly under OKH:

Currently revised courses for commanders of regiments and battalions at an instruction division; from 1942 on, training schools for battery commanders.

Courses for division commanders (extended to include corps commanders). Supervision by Training Branch over training of Army officers as aerial observers in special courses at the Reconnaissance Schools of the Air Force.

c. General Staff Training

Establishment of and directives for General Staff courses to insure that potential general staff officers continued to receive suitable training.

From 1943 onward, War Academy reopened.

Refresher courses for recalled General Staff reserve officers.

Further training of General Staff officers working with higher headquarters.

Intelligence courses (line and reserve officers).

Logistics courses (line and reserve officers).

d. Special Duties

Requests regarding training addressed to the Air Force.

Current information regarding developments in ground tactics for training schools of the Air Force.

Air - Ground cooperation,

Communication service.

Coordination of the training of air landing units.

Cooperation with Allies in the sphere of training.

Exchange of experiences.

Coordination of tactics for joint missions.

In case of supply with weapons, pertinent orientation courses.

Demonstrations of weapons (traveling instruction teams), to give instruction regarding important new weapons, their employment and efficiency.

Section II

a. Training Policy

Instructions for combat by all arms (Kampf aller Waffen).

Directives concerning exercises of command.

Instructions for commanders from division upward.

Manual for General Staff service with troops.

Provisional evaluation of combat experiences.

Information sheets for the speedy information of the troops:

1. about experience gained in combat
2. about new-type enemy combat units, conclusions drawn from combat experience
3. about peculiarities of new theaters (terrain, climate)

b. Review Activities

Regulations regarding the compilation of all manuals and directives, checking as to uniformity of treatment, agreement as to terminology and tactical correctness.

1. Field Service Regulations for the various arms (company to brigade)
2. Technical Regulations (principles regarding the employment of new weapons)
3. Training manuals
   basic manuals as well as individual manuals for the various arms and services.

c. Training films

d. Rules for the Keeping of War Diaries

e. Collection of individual descriptions of engagements for propagandistic exploitation

f. Printing, number of copies, distribution formula and actual distribution of publications

g. Tactical Unit Insignia

Intelligence on Foreign Armies and the Foreign Intelligence Service 1940-45

MS # P-041h

(These two studies should be considered as one volume.)

The authors of these two studies are exceptionally well qualified to prepare and comment on material in this field. Certain statements in the study, such as, a. "the education and advanced training of officers employed in the Intelligence Services lacked planned control," b. "the most important obstacle encountered by the intelligence personnel was, 'the low opinion of the intelligence service generally current in General Staff circles'" c. "personnel assigned for this work were inadequate, both numerically and in some cases in respect to their qualifications," also "in practice it therefore often proved more advantageous to appoint reserve officers as intelligence officers in the intermediate level staffs, even though this meant that the highest standards of performance could not always be expected." These extracts reflect the attitude of not only the key intelligence personnel, but also persons making major decisions in Germany during WW II.

The organization and operations of German intelligence and counter-intelligence agencies are covered in general terms. No world shaking examples of their success or failure are revealed. Material presented discloses, that on occasion, decisions, even at the highest leve, were made with utter contempt of well founded information available and presented. For example, information objectively analyzed on the Stalingrad area, was disregarded in arriving at strategic and tactical decisions on this operation.

Sources providing information and agencies used in gathering material are adequately covered. An objective appraisal discloses that even the layman frequently possesses facts vital to completing the enemy's mosaic. It shows that in the daily activities of a democratic nation much information is disclosed innocently. An alert attache or liaison officer can acquire much material through sources generally available to the public. This he can use effectively to obtain an accurate picture, not only of a country's armed forces, but also its economic, political and moral pulse. A few common sources providing information are: (1) technical publications, (2) equipment markings, (3) APO's, (4) shoulder patches. In addition to these, there are the newscasts, newspaper releases on important persons, statistics on production, continuously published by the Wall Street Journal, etc.

In conclusion, it is fair to state that the German system was no better or worse than that used in other countries. Material presented in this study is a logical development of any intelligence system, to have less would seriously reflect on this function. It is well known

that the German intelligence service was more ingenious than portrayed. For example, prior to the operations in the Northern Theater, Denmark, etc., officers, dressed in civilian clothes, travelled freely as tourists collecting detailed material on items of military interest. It would be naive to expect the authors to disclose such actions.

Recommendation: That the classification be withdrawn from this study.

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